

Message Text

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EXDIS, GENEVA FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOL RPT OUAGADOUGOU 2969 ACTION SECSTATE 7 JUL 78 QUOTE

S E C R E T OUAGADOUGOU 2969

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CF, XA, XS

SUBJECT: AFRICA POLICY: SHABA, SOVIET/CUBAN INVLOVEMENT

REF: STATE 153145

1 SUMMARY. WE MUST RECOGNIZE OAU INEFFECTIVENESS AS A SYMPTOM OF AFRICA'S PRESENT CONDITION. THERESORT TO OUTSIDE INTERVENTION-BY INVITATION-- IS REGARDED BY SOME AFRICAN STATES AS ONE OF THE "AFRICAN SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICAN PROBLEMS". HELPING THE AFRICANS TO HELP THEMSELVES TO MEET FUTURE SHABA SITUAIONS IS A LONG-TERM OPERATIONS, WHICH WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL PLANNING ON OUR OWN PART AND EXTENSIVE--AND BROADER--

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CONSUTATION AND COORDINATION WITH THE AFRICAN STATES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE O.A.U. IS INEFFECTIVE. THIS IS READILY RECOGNIZED IF NOT OPENLY ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE AFRICANS. BU THE ORGANIZATION ITSELF REFLECTS THE FACTS OF LIFE IN AFRICA-- THERE IS NO UNITY. THE PROBLEMS OF INTERNAL DISINTEGRATION,, MILITARY WEAKNESS, TRIBAL RIVALRIES, UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES,

ILLOGICAL NATIONAL BOUNDARIES INHERITED FROM COLONIALISM, AND THE PRESSING NEED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARE FOREMOST IN AFRICAN MINDS (OR IN THE MINDS OF THE LEADERS AND ELITE). AFRICAN UNITY REMAINS HOWEVER, A USEFUL SLOGAN EVEN IF AT PRESENT ONLY A DISTANT HOPE.

3. AFRICAN SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICAN PROBLEMS--ANOTHER SLOGAN WE SHARE WITH

THE AFRICANS-- CAN IN FACT TAKE MANY FORMS. FOR SOME AFRICANS THE RECOURSE TO SOVIET AND/OR CUBAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE IS A LEGITIMATE RESPONSE TO INTERNAL DISSENSION AND TO REGIONAL DISPUTES AND TENSIONS.

FOR OTHERS, SEEKING THE FINANCIAL AND MILITARY SUPPORT OF FORMER COLONIAL POWERS IS A VALID ACTION, CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY--AND, INDEED CONSIDERED PERHAPS VITAL IN SOME SOME INSTANCES TO THE MAINTENANCE OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. MILITARY FORCE, WHETHER PROVIDED BY AFRICANS, CUBANS, OR WESTERN POWERS, MAY WELL BE REGARDED AS AN "AFRICAN SOLUTION TO AFRICAN PROBLEMS" BY SOME NATIONS OF THE CONTINENT.

4. SINCE ITS CREATION EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO THE O.A.U. HAS HAD TIME TO FRAME APPROPRIATE RESPONSES TO AFRICAN CRISES--WHICH OFTEN HAVE BEEN PREDICTABLE. THE CASE HISTORIES OF PAST DISPUTES, BORDER CONFLICTS.

AND MILITARY INTERVENTIONS OFFER AMPLE EXAMPLES OF THE O.A.U. OF THE SECRET

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PROBLEMS THE ORGANIZATION WAS CREATED IN PART TO COPE WITH. FAILURE TO ACT DERIVES NOT FROM O.A.U.-- OR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS'-- INABILITY TO SEE THE PROBLEM. IT COMES, RATHER, FROM THE BASIC DIFFERENCES IN IDEOLOGY, NATIONAL EXPERIENCE, AND NATIONAL POWER-- AND FEAR OF THE NATIONAL POWER OF OTHERS--AMONG THE STATES OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

5. SUCH DIFFERENCES OBVIOUSLY HAVE SERIOUSLY LIMITED O.A.U. ABILITY TO TAKE DECISIONS ON PROMPT AND APPROPRIATE PEACE-KEEPING MEASURES. WHAT CAN THE U.S. DO ABOUT THIS? A CHALLENGE TO THE O.A.U. ON ITS INEFFECTIVENESS WITHOUT PROVIDING CONCRETE FORMULAS FOR AMELIORATIVE COURSES OF ACTION WOULD, OF COURSE, BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE, BUT THE COMPLEXITY AND ARRAY OF DIFFICULTIES FACED REQUIRE A CAREFUL ASSESSMENT ON OUR OWN PART OF WHAT WE PROPOSE THAT THE AFRICANS AND THE O.A.U. DO TO MEET FUTURE CRISES OF THE SHAZA VARIETY. WE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY FORMULATING SUCH COURSES OF ACTION BEFORE THE O.A.U. KHARTOUM SUMMIT-- AND WE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY IN DOING THIS OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. BUT A START COULD BE MADE, ONCE OUR OWN THOUGHTS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ARE COORDINATED WITHIN THE U.S.G.

6. WE SHOULD GIVE CAREFUL ATTENTION TO THE AFRICAN LEADERS WE CONSULT IN OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A MORE RESPONSIBLE AND RESPONSIVE O.A.U. OUR APPARENT RELIANCE ON A RELATIVELY FEW KEY AFRICAN LEADERS MAKES SENSE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF MAJOR U.S. POLICY OBJECTIVES. OUR VIEW, HOWEVER, IS NOT SO READILY SHARED BY MANY OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS AND STATES. A BROAD CONSULTATION WOULD BE REQUIRED, AND A SENSITIVE APPRECIATION OF THE IMPERATIVES FACED BY THE FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN STATES AND THE OTHER SMALLER STATES WITH WHOM IN THE PAST OUR CONSULTATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN EXTENSIVE.

7. HOW CAN WE HELP THE AFRICANS HELP THEMSELVES TO ORGANIZE APPROPRIATE PEACE KEEPING FORCES? WE SHOULD FIRST CONVINCE OURSELVES, ON THE BASIS OF FAR-REACHING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AFRICANS, THAT THIS IS IN FACT WHAT THE AFRICANS WANT. WHILE THE NEED IS OBVIOUS
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TO US, AND TO THE AFRICANS AS WELL, THEIR DEEPER COMMITMENT TO ACT IN CONCERT MUST BE VERIFIED.

8. IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH AN AFRICAN COMMITMENT, WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO LIVE--AS WE HAVE IN THE PAST-- WITH AN INEFFECTIVE O.A.U. WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CONDUCTING A MAJOR EFFORT TO RALLY THE AFRICANS, TO ANALYZE THE CRISES SITUATIONS WHICH MAY ATTRACT OUTSIDE INTERVENTION, AND TO DEVELOP--IN CONCERT WITH THE AFRICANS-- COURSES OF ACTION WHICH MEET THEIR OWN APPRECIATION OF THE THREATS TO AFRICA AS WELL AS OUR OWN POLICY INTERESTS IN THE CONTINENT. THIS IS A LONG-TERM ENDEAVOR. WE MUST GEAR UP FOR IT, BEGIN OUR CONSULTATIONS AT AN EARLY STAGE, AND BE PREPARED FOR FRUSTRATIONS. WITH THEIR ENORMOUSLY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS, OFFERS AT LEAST REASONABLY HOPEFUL PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE. KILLION

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